

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 23-33, objected to claims 9-11, 17-22, 42-44, and 50-55, and rejected claims 1-8, 12-16, 34-41, and 45-49. By this paper, Applicant amended claims 1, 6, 13, 28, 34, 36, and 43-46, and cancelled claims 5, 9, 22, 38, 42, and 55 to place the present application in condition for allowance. No new matter was added. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10-21, 23-37, 39-41, and 43-54 remain pending in the present application and are in condition for allowance.

Claim Objection

The Examiner objected to claim 1 because of informalities. Accordingly, Applicant amended claim 1, as suggested by the Examiner. *See* Office Action, page 2. This amendment is considered to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 13-15, and 34-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Blakely et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,323,776). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, this rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments to independent claims 1, 13, and 34. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 1-2, 13-15, and 34-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 102, and allow the claims.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 3-8, 12, 16, 36-41, and 45-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Blakely et al. in view of Redeker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,858,265). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, this rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments to independent claims 1, 13, 34, and 46. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 3-8, 12, 16, 36-41, and 45-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, and allow the claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants graciously acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. The Examiner objected to claims 9-11, 17-22, 42-44, and 50-55 as being dependent base claim, but which would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. *See* Office Action, page 11. Further, as indicated, the Examiner allowed claims 23-33. *See id.*

Claim Amendments

In view of the allowable subject matter noted above, Applicant amended independent claims 1, 13, 34, and 46 to incorporate subject matter indicated allowable by the Examiner. It should be noted, however, that Applicants believe certain aspects of the original claims to be distinguishable over the cited references and, thus, Applicants may wish to file a continuation application to pursue this subject matter. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims 1-4, 6-8, 10-21, 23-37, 39-41, and 43-54.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 3, 2007



Floron C. Faries III
Reg. No. 59,991
FLETCHER YODER
P.O. Box 692289
Houston, TX 77269-2289
(281) 970-4545